

Best Management Practices for Dental Amalgam

1. Eliminate all use of bulk elemental mercury (also referred to as liquid or raw mercury). Use only pre-capsulated dental amalgam.
2. Limit the amount of amalgam used to the smallest appropriate size.
3. Install plastic disposable chair-side amalgam traps in both the vacuum system and cuspidor of each operatory where restoration work is done. Never rinse traps in the sink.
4. Do not use sodium hypochlorite (bleach) to disinfect vacuum lines, because it speeds the release of mercury from amalgam.
5. Change vacuum pump filters and screens at least once per month, or as directed by the manufacturer.
6. If the practice has a dry turbine vacuum unit, have a licensed amalgam recycler or hazardous waste disposal service pump out and clean the air-water separator tank at least once every six months.
7. Have a licensed recycling contractor, mail-in-service, or hazardous waste hauler remove your amalgam wastes.
8. Maintain written or computerized logs of amalgam waste generated, and of amalgam waste removed from the vacuum system or plumbing.
9. Store amalgam waste in airtight containers.
10. Use a licensed hauler for off-site recycling of spent fixer solution, or for management of fixer as a hazardous waste.
11. Train staff in proper handling, management, and disposal of mercury-containing material and fixer-containing solutions. Maintain a training log.

Amalgam waste must **NEVER** be placed in the regular trash, disposed of with infectious waste, or flushed down the drain or toilet.

The ADA strongly recommends recycling as a best management practice for dental offices.

The *San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant* serves the Cities of San Jose, Santa Clara, Milpitas, Cupertino Sanitary District, West Valley Sanitation District (including Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Saratoga), County Sanitation Districts 2-3 Sunol & Burbank Sanitary Districts



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